

REMARKS

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-8, 10-11, 13-14, 16--24 will have been amended to enhance clarity. Further, no claims will have canceled or added. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims, together with withdrawal of the outstanding rejections.

Initially, Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority and confirming receipt of the certified copy of the priority document. Applicants also note with appreciation the Examiner's consideration of the documents cited in the Information Disclosure Statement, filed on February 27, 2004, and on June 10, 2004.

However, Applicants note that the Examiner did not consider the English language abstract of JP 2-93263, which was cited in the Information Disclosure Statement of June 10, 2004. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to return a copy of the PTO-1449 confirming his consideration of the English language abstract of JP 2-93263 in the next communication.

In the Official Action, the Examiner asserted that there is insufficient antecedent basis for the recitation of "the check valve" in claim 14. To overcome the Examiner's assertion, Applicants have amended claim 14 to depend on claim 13, which provides proper antecedent basis for the claimed "check valve". Thus, as "the check valve" recitation in claim 14 has proper antecedent basis, favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Further, the Examiner rejected claims 1-12, 15, 16, and 21-25 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by YOSHIHISA et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,779,425), hereinafter referred to as YOSHIHISA. Additionally, the Examiner rejected claims 13-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over YOSHIHISA.

Applicants, however, respectfully traverse each of the above-mentioned rejections and submit that they are inappropriate with respect to the claims pending in the present application. In this regard, Applicants submit that the combination of features recited in each of Applicants' claims is not taught, disclosed, or rendered obvious by YOSHIHISA.

In particular, Applicants submit that the present invention is directed towards, inter alia, a multi-type air conditioner that is configured to prevent an occurrence of refrigerant flow noise from an indoor unit that is not in operation. To achieve such a beneficial feature, the multi-type air conditioner includes at least a noise preventor, as recited in the claims.

However, Applicants submit that YOSHIHISA does not disclose or suggest at least a multi-type air conditioner comprising an indoor expansion device and a noise preventor comprising a first valve connected to a respective open/close valve, as recited in the claims. Rather, YOSHIHISA is directed towards providing one electromagnetic valve (141), one capillary tube (142), and one evaporator (143) connected in series. In disclosing such a configuration, YOSHIHISA does not disclose or suggest each electromagnetic valve as being connected to a

respective (i.e., distinct) open/close valve, but discloses each of the electromagnetic valves as being connected to a single, constant pressure expansion valve (17). Thus, due to at least these distinguishing features of the present invention, as recited in the claims, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Furthermore, YOSHIHISA does not disclose or suggest an indoor unit, as recited. Rather, YOSHIHISA only discloses the evaporators as being disposed in the refrigerating chambers (e.g., column 3, lines 23-31). YOSHIHISA, however, does not disclose a refrigerating chamber, as comprising additional features (such as an indoor expansion device). Accordingly, for at least this additional reason, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Additionally, Applicants submit that YOSHIHISA fails to disclose or suggest at least a distributor that selectively distributes refrigerant from the outdoor unit to the plurality of indoor units in accordance with respective operation modes, as recited in claim 1. Rather, YOSHIHISA discloses a refrigerating circuit in which the temperature in each refrigerating chamber is controlled by each corresponding electromagnetic valve (e.g., column 3, lines 29-31). Further, YOSHIHISA does not disclose or suggest any distinct operating modes. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Thus, in view of at least each of the arguments herein, Applicants submit that claims 1 and 21 are in condition for allowance. With regard to dependent claims 2-20 and 22-25, Applicants assert that they are allowable on their own

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merit, as well as because they depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 or 21, which Applicants have shown to be allowable.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejections of the claims, as well as an indication of the allowability of each of the claims, in view of the herein-contained remarks.

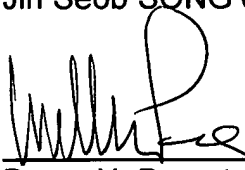
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION


Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request an indication to that effect. Applicants have amended the claims to enhance clarity and provided explicit evidence of their allowability. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the recited claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Any amendments to the claims, which have been made in this amendment and that have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art and should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability. Accordingly, no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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